sinking an indefinite amount of capital and labour, with an endless quantity of material, into such hopeless sloughs of despond, ought certainly to be a regular system of boring in search of a bottom for the heavy materials to rest upon. But thousand upon thousand of tons are shovelled into the gulph in search of the bottom which should have previously been ascertained, and nothing to shew for it. Several thousands of pounds have been lost as usual in a portion of the Cashel line, which crosses, or is intended to cross, a bog, into which the whole of that portion of the line has already subsided, and where the piles, which even yet are being sunk (in order to reach the foregone material, we imagine) are altogether lost until they "*come up again*, at a long distance from the place where they were sunk." The sinking of the heavy materials in such cases, and the 'coming up again' of the lighter, surely ought by this time to have re-suggested what has been so often suggested by dire experience such as this. But, on the contrary, in place of consulting and being enlightened by the history of such labours as those of the crossing of Chat Moss on the Liverpool and Manchester—the very first of all constructed lines—or of the Stowmarket morass, or many other similar cases, in which it was ultimately found that nothing would do but a floating net-work of hurdles, brushwood, peat, turf, poles, branches, and other light materials, on which to lay the basis of the line,—the conclusion which has been come to at the Cashel bog, at so much expense, appears to be, that "the portion of the Cashel railway which subsided into the bog *it is impossible to replace*."——A correspondent of the *Gardener's Chronicle* recommends the planting of the slopes of railway embankments with larch, as a nursery for sleepers, which, he remarks, would realise a handsome profit after all expense was paid, as not only would a sufficiency of sleepers be supplied for the line, but a quantity of wood for hop poles, or other purposes, be yearly supplied. A suggestion of this same sort was long since made in THE BUILDER.——A resident engineer, an inspector, and a superintendent, of the Dundee and Perth line, were lately placed at the bar of the High Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh, on a charge of culpable homicide and neglect of duty, in the case of an accident to a train unsuited to a certain curvature of a skew bridge at Pilmore, parish of Longforgan, Perthshire, the contract plan of which the resident engineer had changed so as to make the curvature unequal, while the chairs also were insecurely fastened. The Lord Advocate, however, withdrew the respective charges against the parties after evidence had been given, although he hesitated to do so in the case of the engineer, Mr. Hugh Heugh McLure, civil engineer at Dumfries, the then resident engineer charged, inasmuch as he had not consulted the chief engineer, Mr. Miller, as to changing the contract plan. The counsel for Mr. McLure said he would have proved to demonstration that his client was blameless.——In the County Court at Shoreditch a first-class passenger from London to Cambridge has recovered 20*l.* and costs at law for the loss of a portmanteau, for which the company held they were not liable.——The Brighton Company have reduced the working expenses on their locomotive and carriage department items 16,000*l.* on the half-year, and probably 35,000*l.* or more on the whole year. It is to be hoped they have not reduced the public safety, in consequence, to an equivalent amount.——The French Provisional Government, it is rumoured, are determined to take possession of all the French railways for the public behoof, making an 'equitable arrangement' with the shareholders. At an interview, the Government, it is said, intimated to the directors of the Paris and Lyons line that they will take all the lines at par, and pay for the 5 per cent. stock at par. They have suppressed the Royal Commissions, and appointed inspecteurs de l'exploitation commerciale, principaux, and particuliers. The directors of several lines are finding their employés exceedingly troublesome. On the Rouen line the drivers refuse to work more than fifteen days a month, and demand increased wages and power to appoint those under them. Threats on this and other lines have been used that such claims will be enforced, and the directors are much alarmed. The Northern, some time since, appointed shares of profit to be dealt among its employés.——The Belgian Minister of Public Works has called upon the companies whose lines are in construction, to employ the greatest possible number of hands. The Namur and Liege and Mons and Manage Companies, which are more forward than the rest, have applied to Government for a loan on the security of the works.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

THE Newark Corn Exchange works have been brought to a standstill by the failure of the contractors, Messrs. Stephen Fisher, stonemason, and William Brown, joiner, whose estimates, the *Lincolnshire Times* remarks, were much too low. The Company, it is thought, will finish the works themselves, under the superintendence of some efficient party.——In consequence of the reduction in the price of gas last summer at Leicester, the consumption in private houses, according to the *Leicester Journal*, has been so much increased, that although the manufactories have not been in a condition to use so much as before by upwards of a million cubic feet in the half year, the entire quantity consumed has nevertheless made up for the whole of that deficiency, and increased the usual consumption over and above. But considering the still immense excess of the price to the public (5s. 6½d.) over the actual cost in that vicinity, namely 2s., as lately exposed to view in THE BUILDER (p. 17, *ante*), the gas authorities have a vast fund of public good yet to dispense in continued reductions, which this recent experience ought to assure them will re-act upon their own interests, and not only make up for all deficiency in price, but increase their profit over and above. And why should not the public of Leicester *individually* be supplied with their private requirements of gas-light at least at the much lower rate at which they *are* actually already supplied *generally*, for their street lamps, namely, at 3s. 4d.? We regard the *fact* that the Leicester public *are* supplied at that rate, to be evidence incontrovertible that 5s. 6½d. for supplies to parties not protected by the moral force of corporate authority or association, is an indefensible overcharge, which the gas authorities would not dare to make were the private consumers united, as an association, for the reduction of price at least to the public standard already established amongst them.——The foundations of St. Mark's Church, Wolverton, are in a forward state. The Duke of Cleveland is to lay the chief stone.——The materials of several buildings in the way of the Birmingham Town-hall improvements have been announced for sale.——In consequence of some dispute between Messrs. Hardwicke and Pashby, the contractors, and the workmen employed by them at the gaol and asylum at Winson-green, Birmingham, the men have struck work and have endeavoured to coerce the masters, by preventing others from continuing and from undertaking to do what they have themselves declined; and one of those who refused to sacrifice himself and family to the despotic fiat of his fellows was actually thrown into a canal, whence he only saved himself by happening to be able to swim. In this and other cases of assault, the magistrates have in the meantime admonished the assailants on the highly illegal and oppressive nature of their proceedings.——The new school buildings in All Saints, Worcester, are now completed by the conversion of the old rectory-house, on a plan by Messrs. Rowe and Son, architects, executed under their superintendance by Mr. Harrington, of Broad-street. The Committee of Council on Education and the National Society are to assist subscribers in the payment of the expense.——A carved gothic monument has just been erected in the chancel of Tamworth Church, in form of a mural niche with corbells, buttresses, and canopy, in Caen stone, and a marble tablet. The artist was Mr. Matthew Cooke, of Gloucester.——The foundation stone of a new church at Toxteth-park, Liverpool, to be called St. Matthew's, was laid by the Earl of Sefton on Tuesday week. It is to contain 1,300 sittings—900 free.——Brinksway stone bridge, at Stockport, to form a public communication between the counties of Chester and Lancaster, is now completed. The contract was taken in October last by Messrs. H. and S. Bann, builders, of Stockport. It is 10 yards wide between the parapets, with a flagged footpath on the up-stream side of 4 feet 6 inches, and on the down-stream of 3 feet, the parapets being 4 feet 6 inches above the level of the footpaths. It has a 60 feet span over the river between the abutments, with a rise of 17 feet 8½ inches from the spring stone, and a flood-hole on each side 7 feet in diameter. The cost is estimated at 2,000*l.*——A gentleman at Manchester has offered 1,000*l.* towards the endowment of a church; and another has offered an estate suitable for an episcopal palace, including a house with six entertaining rooms and ten bed rooms, at any price, between 5,000*l.* and 10,000*l.*, fixed by the surveyor of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners—the sum so fixed to be expended in the building of churches in the parish.——The pit and gallery of a wooden circus, temporarily erected at Leeds, gave way recently, while closely packed with people, and injured several, and killed one of them on the spot. The cause is suspected to have been the want of sufficient props to support the beams. The *Leeds Intelligencer* very properly recommends that all such buildings for public exhibitions or meetings should be examined by the borough surveyor, and certified as to safety. Measures ought at the same time to be taken against fire, to which such erections have hitherto generally fallen a sacrifice.——St. Luke's Church, Eccleshill, was to be consecrated on Tuesday last.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

A GENERAL meeting of the Commissioners of Sewers was held on Thursday, the 23rd ult.; Lord Morpeth, M.P., in the chair.

The following reports on the subject of the Ordnance survey of the metropolis were presented by Sir H. de la Beche and Mr. Chadwick:—

"Understanding that the Ordnance survey of Westminster is now sufficiently advanced to permit the needful steps to be taken for ascertaining the subterraneous levels connected with the branch and main sewerage, so that the information collected may be added to the block-plan—a measure essential to the future arrangement of the general drainage,—

We recommend that at least three properly qualified persons, such as may be obtained among the Sappers and Miners, who have been employed on the Ordnance survey, and who, having served their time in that corps, have now quitted it, should be engaged for this duty, and that under them the number of labourers requisite be employed, so that the work may be completed with out loss of time.

"Having received a communication from Lieut.-Colonel Hall, to the effect that the minor area first recommended to be surveyed for the block-plan of London had so nearly been completed, that it would be desirable to have the next minor area to be surveyed, pointed out, we have to report that seeing the great advantages of ascertaining the relative levels of a considerable natural area for drainage purposes, so that all works constructed, particularly in the lower ground, should have reference to a comprehensive system, at once effective and least costly, we have requested Lieut.-Colonel Hall to proceed with an adjoining portion of ground where the requisite object can be attained.

The new minor area consists of a district comprised within the limits mentioned in the accompanying document, and, when completed, will afford data of great importance for the consideration of the drainage applicable to a large part of London. Without this knowledge, works carried on within the low district of Westminster might want that reference to a general system, which is important, and money be expended upon them, which, however justifiable as respects that low ground alone, might be injudiciously spent as regards a proper and general system of works."

"The second area proposed for the extension of the Ordnance survey of the metropolis consists of the district immediately adjoining to and northward of the first area, now nearly completed; and is bounded by the river from Westminster-bridge to Waterloo-bridge, Wellington-street, and Tottenham-court-road on the east; the New-road, Grand Junction-road, and the Lee-bridge-road on the north; the Queen's-road, Kensington Gardens, and thence to the westernmost portion of the first area on the west."

The reports were agreed to unanimously.

On the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee, it was agreed that 1,300 feet of sewer should be built in Dean-street, Soho, the inhabitants in the district contributing a portion of the expense.

In answer to a question from the Hon. F. Byng, Mr. Hertslet stated that a great portion of Greek-street, in which the Sewers' Office is situate, is at present without any sewer.

A new sewer was ordered to be built in Winchester-road, New-road; and in reference to the expense, it was remarked that a portion that would formerly have cost 200*l.* would, under the improved regulations, cost scarcely 50*l.* And a similar remark was made as to a proposed new sewer at Reeve's Mews, Hoxton, Mr. Chadwick stating that what, under the old mode, would have cost 600*l.*, will now, with a very superior drainage, cost only 215*l.*, besides affording relief to a quarter of an acre of garden ground, enabling it to be converted into a useful purpose, which, without such relief,

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